

# H.O.O.P.S.

H.O.O.P.S. is an activity-based program that stands for “**Helping Ourselves and Others Problem Solve.**” The program uses basketball as the teaching tool for children who are struggling socially or children who have a difficult time managing their feelings. There are high-functioning kids mixed in also; kids who just love to play basketball. The idea is to use peer models as teaching tools for the kids who struggle. There are typically 20-25 second through fifth graders participating, with written permission from their parents.

H.O.O.P.S. meets twice a week in the gym between the time busses arrive and the time the bell rings, which is usually about 20 minutes. During this time the H.O.O.P.S. kids play basketball in the gym. The teams and drills are divided so that there are always some strong kids paired with less skilled kids. The PE teacher supervises the activity, coaching them through the basketball, conflict resolution skills, and problem solving. All the kids know they are there to promote problem solving when conflict arises, and they come to be viewed leaders on the playground during recess times.

H.O.O.P.S. is a privilege and kids enjoy the opportunity. When real problems happen on the court, they work through them and get back to playing. The program builds bridges between grades, it allows for real life problem solving, it gets kids moving and it builds their confidence.

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